



## **McGregor W. Scott**

United States Attorney  
Eastern District of California

*Sacramento*  
501 I. Street, Ste 10-100  
Sacramento CA 95814  
Tel (916) 554-2700  
TTY (916) 554-2855

## **NEWS RELEASE**

*Fresno*  
2500 Tulare St., Suite 4401  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Tel (559) 497-4000  
TTY (559) 497-4500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Rosemary Shaul (916) 554-2802

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae>

### **SACRAMENTO MAN ADMITS DESTROYING U.S. POST OFFICE VENDING MACHINES AND PROPERTY TO STEAL MONEY, POSTAL MONEY ORDERS, AND STAMPS TO SUPPORT HIS DRUG HABIT**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that VERNAN LEE KOHLER, 31, of Sacramento, pled guilty today before United States District Judge Lawrence K. Karlton to depredation of United States Post Office property, theft of United States Post Office property, and possession of stolen United States Post Office Money Orders. KOHLER was initially charged in a federal indictment filed on June 7, 2007.

The case is being investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service with the assistance of the City of Sacramento's Police Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez, who is prosecuting the case, just after midnight on April 21, 2007, KOHLER entered the Broadway Branch of the United States Post Office in Sacramento, California. KOHLER carried pry bars and tools so that he could vandalize United States Post Office property and steal from United States Post Office vending machines. KOHLER was captured on surveillance video destroying vending machines and other property. During the course of the investigation, officers and federal agents were able to identify KOHLER, his clothing, and the cashed (money order) proceeds from his vandalism and theft.

KOHLER is scheduled to be sentenced on October 2, 2007. For the depredation of property offense, the maximum penalty he faces is up to ten years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000. KOHLER also faces up to five years for his conviction for theft of United States Property and for his theft of United States Post Office money orders. He also will receive a three year term of federal supervised release. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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